

Message Text

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ACTION ARA-10

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 CU-02 USIA-06 RSC-01 /020 W

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P 212021Z OCT 74

FM AMEMBASSY SANTO DOMINGO

TO SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 1862

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E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: OTRA, SCUL, DR

SUBJECT: PROPOSED TRAVEL OF TOM SEMLER

REF : STATE 229788

1. AS DEPT NOTED, I HAVE SOME RESERVATIONS ABOUT SEMLER'S PROPOSAL. FUNDAMENTALLY, THERE IS CONSIDERABLE BASEBALL PLAYED HERE IN ORGANIZED (A LA DOMINICANA) FASHION--BIG LEAGUES, MIDDLE-SIZED LEAGUES AND LITTLE LEAGUES. THE ESSENTIAL QUESTION IS HOW CAN US INTEREST BEST BE SERVED THROUGH THIS ACTIVITY THE TWO CULTURES HAVE IN COMMON, GIVEN LIMITED US RESOURCES. I BELIEVE THAT MORE CAN BE ACCOMPLISHED THROUGH INTERNATIONAL EXCHANGE (IN BOTH DIRECTIONS) THAN THROUGH ORGANIZING SOME MAMMOUTH TOURNAMENT NATIONALLY IN A SPORT THAT IS DOING RATHER WELL ON ITS OWN. SEMLER AND WE COULD PROBABLY HELP ORGANIZE THINGS BETTER IN THE DOMINICAN BASEBALL WORLD, BUT I QUESTION WHETHER THE EFFORT AND MONEY INVOLVED WOULD BE AS PRODUCTIVE AS THE SAME RESOURCES DEVOTED TO INTERNATIONAL EXCHANGE.

2. NONETHELESS, SEMLER (WHO I HAVE NOT MET PERSONALLY) SEEMS TO BE AN ASSET WORTH CULTIVATING AND THERE IS MUCH TO BE DONE IN THE SPORTS FIELD. CONSEQUENTLY, I DO NOT WISH TO DISCOURAGE HIM ENTIRELY. I WOULD SUGGEST THEREFORE THAT SEMLER'S ENTHUSIASM BE TESTED BY ENCOURAGING HIM TO COME TO THE DOMREP AT HIS OWN EXPENSE WHERE I SHALL BE PLEASED TO RECEIVE HIM TO DISCUSS HIS PLANS. I DO NOT RPT NOT THINK HIS PROJECT AS CURRENTLY CONCEIVED WARRANTS ANY US FUNDING (INCLUDING HIS TRIP) UNTIL HE AND I HAVE TALKED. I AM ALSO A BIT UNEASY FRANKLY ABOUT ENTHUSIASTS

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WHO COULD EXPLOIT DEPT BACKING BY THROWING WEIGHT AROUND IN

THIS LITTLE COUNTRY. MY ADVISE THEREFORE IS THAT WE GO SLOW
UNTIL A MUTUALLY AGREED SPORTS PROGRAM IS FORMULATED.
HURWITCH

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Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptioning: X
Capture Date: 01 JAN 1994
Channel Indicators: n/a
Current Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Concepts: VISITS, ATHLETIC PRESENTATIONS, BASEBALL
Control Number: n/a
Copy: SINGLE
Draft Date: 21 OCT 1974
Decaption Date: 01 JAN 1960
Decaption Note:
Disposition Action: RELEASED
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Authority: shawdg
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Date: 28 MAY 2004
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
Disposition Remarks:
Document Number: 1974SANTO04376
Document Source: CORE
Document Unique ID: 00
Drafter: n/a
Enclosure: n/a
Executive Order: N/A
Errors: N/A
Film Number: D740299-0911
From: SANTO DOMINGO
Handling Restrictions: n/a
Image Path:
ISecure: 1
Legacy Key: link1974/newtext/t19741030/aaaaazjr.tel
Line Count: 64
Locator: TEXT ON-LINE, ON MICROFILM
Office: ACTION ARA
Original Classification: LIMITED OFFICIAL USE
Original Handling Restrictions: n/a
Original Previous Classification: n/a
Original Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Page Count: 2
Previous Channel Indicators: n/a
Previous Classification: LIMITED OFFICIAL USE
Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Reference: STATE 229788
Review Action: RELEASED, APPROVED
Review Authority: shawdg
Review Comment: n/a
Review Content Flags:
Review Date: 25 SEP 2002
Review Event:
Review Exemptions: n/a
Review History: RELEASED <25 SEP 2002 by boyleja>; APPROVED <05 MAR 2003 by shawdg>
Review Markings:

Declassified/Released
US Department of State
EO Systematic Review
30 JUN 2005

Review Media Identifier:
Review Referrals: n/a
Review Release Date: n/a
Review Release Event: n/a
Review Transfer Date:
Review Withdrawn Fields: n/a
Secure: OPEN
Status: NATIVE
Subject: PROPOSED TRAVEL OF TOM SEMLER
TAGS: OTRA, SCUL, DR, HEMISPORTS, (SEMLER, TOM)
To: STATE
Type: TE
Markings: Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 30 JUN 2005